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INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE  
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC

UNCLAS KUALA LUMPUR 000753

SIPDIS

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FOR EAP/MTS AND G/TIP

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KCRM](#) [MY](#)  
SUBJECT: MALAYSIA TABLES ANTI-TIP BILL IN PARLIAMENT, SEEKS  
QUICK PASSAGE

REF: KUALA LUMPUR 653

¶1. (U) The Government of Malaysia tabled a comprehensive Anti-Trafficking in Persons (TIP) bill in Parliament on April 24 and predicted speedy passage. After tabling the bill, de facto Law Minister and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Mohamed Nazri bin Abdul Aziz told reporters the bill would be passed in the current session of Parliament, though we have not yet been able to confirm this plan directly with Nazri's office. Parliament, which had been scheduled to conclude the current session on April 26, has been extended until May 10 to address a new slate of bills recently introduced, including the much anticipated anti-TIP legislation. If not passed in this sitting, Parliament's next opportunity would be the June 18 - July 10 session. Nazri also advised the press that the newly introduced legislation would allow Malaysia to accede to the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons.

¶2. (U) Cabinet members spoke out publicly on the need for the law. Nazri told reporters, "This law will address the concerns raised about human trafficking and arm enforcement agencies with the tools to fight it." Women's Minister also spoke out publicly in support of the legislation, characterizing human trafficking "as one of the worst crimes and must be dealt with accordingly." She further explained to the press that once the bill is passed the Women's ministry would set up "half-way houses" to provide protection to trafficking victims. The New Straits Times, a leading daily heavily influenced by the Malaysian Government, carried the introduction of the anti-trafficking bill as its sole front-page story under the headline, "Clout to Act Against Human Traffickers," along with an inside article entitled, "Govt goes all out to beat human trafficking." The stories highlighted the bill's provisions to recognize victims and punish traffickers with up to 20 years in jail.

¶3. (SBU) Comment: We will examine the legislation and its provisions. At this point, the rapid drafting and tabling of the bill shows great movement on the part of Malaysian government, which has publicly heralded this bill's importance for the nation. This step represents a remarkable change in the GOM's focus from just six months ago. Persistent, action-oriented and behind-the-scenes diplomacy have produced results with the Malaysian government on this principal human rights effort and allowed the Malaysians to claim the anti-trafficking issue as their own priority.  
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